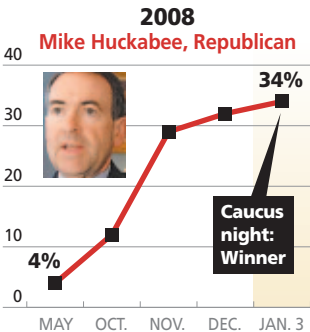


The ups and downs of caucus candidacies

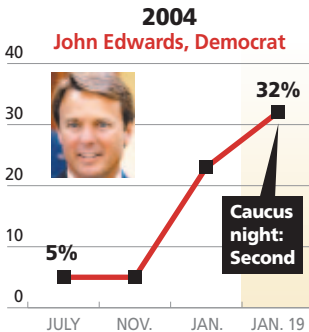
In many caucus cycles, a well-known political figure will snatch the lead in early polls and maintain front-runner status through an Iowa caucus victory. Examples include George W. Bush and Al Gore in 2000, Bob Dole in 1988 and 1996, and Walter Mondale in 1984. But other cycles have featured dramatic rises and falls, offering caution to front-runners and hope to second-tier candidates in a race that has already seen plenty of ups and downs in the polls. Here are the biggest rises and falls, according to The Des Moines Register's Iowa Poll and caucus-night results. (The modern Iowa caucuses date to 1972, but the Register didn't do caucus polling in the early years.)

5 BIGGEST CAUCUS SURGES . . .



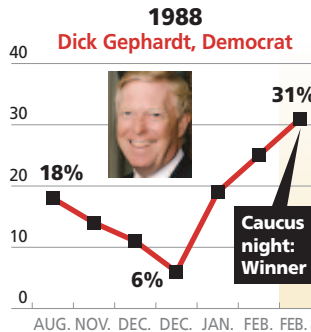
Low to high:
30 percentage points

The candidacy of the former Arkansas governor and Baptist minister picked up steam after notching a surprising second-place finish to Mitt Romney in the Iowa GOP straw poll in August. Huckabee capitalized on support from evangelical Christians and home-school networks to overcome Romney's big-budget campaign.



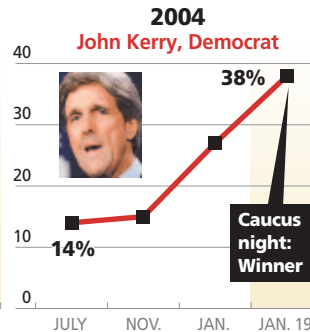
Low to high:
27 percentage points

The first-term North Carolina senator gained ground as a positive, fresh face from the South in a campaign marked by a flurry of negative advertising from former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean and U.S. Rep. Dick Gephardt of Missouri.



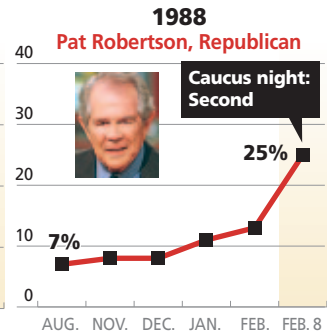
Low to high:
25 percentage points

U.S. Rep. Dick Gephardt of Missouri benefited from his residency in a neighboring state and his populist message in the depths of the farm crisis. He waged a traditional Iowa caucuses retail campaign, visiting all 99 counties, paired with well-received television ads later in the campaign.



Low to high:
24 percentage points

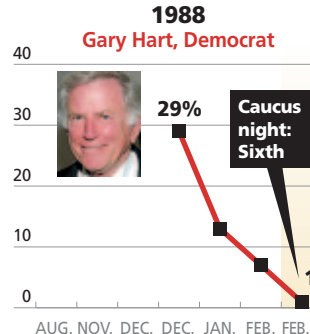
The Massachusetts senator started out long-winded and defensive about his vote to authorize the war with Iraq, but he became more focused as the campaign progressed. He emphasized his Vietnam War record and Senate foreign policy experience to appear more presidential than former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean and first-term North Carolina Sen. John Edwards.



Low to high:
18 percentage points

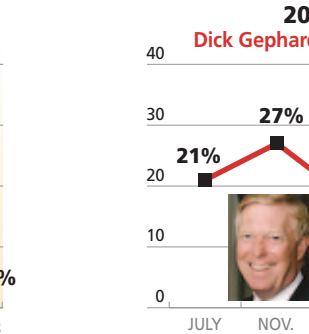
Robertson, founder of the Christian Broadcasting Network and host of "The 700 Club" TV show, made an all-out run in Iowa. His campaign is credited with organizing the Christian right into a potent force in the state.

. . . AND 4 BIGGEST SLIDES



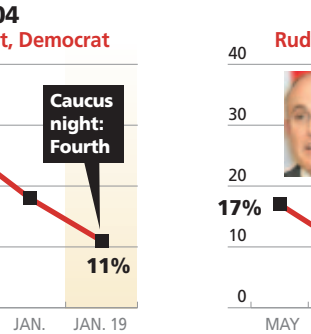
High to low:
28 percentage points

After placing second in the 1984 Iowa caucuses, Hart was expected to be a strong contender, but accusations of marital infidelity drove him out of the race in May. He re-entered it in December, prompting the Register to poll twice that month, before he entered the race and after. The later poll showed him briefly in the lead, but with no organization or money and with media coverage of alleged infidelity fresh in voters' minds, his poll numbers plummeted.



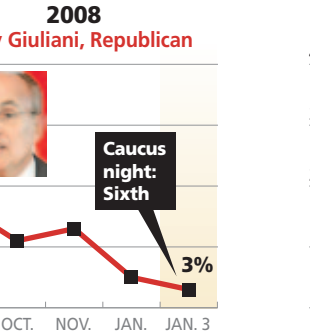
High to low:
16 percentage points

U.S. Rep. Dick Gephardt of Missouri, who championed the causes of working people and labor unions, peaked too soon, and he turned off voters with negative advertising.



High to low:
14 percentage points

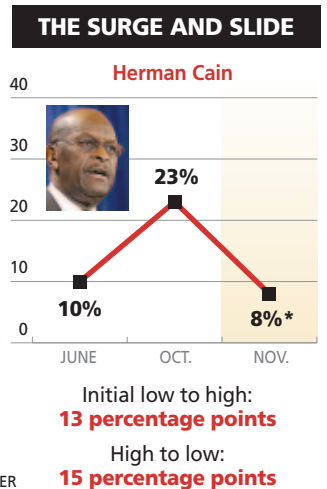
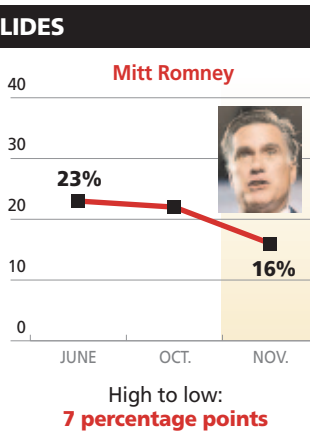
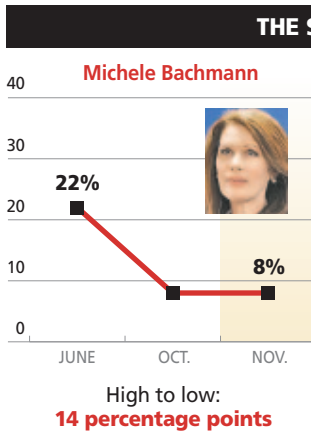
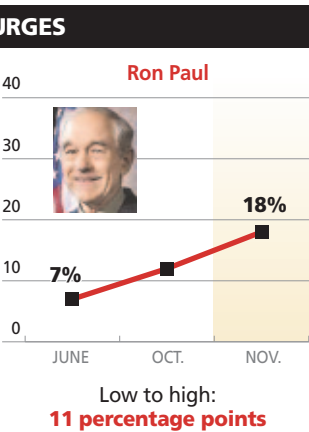
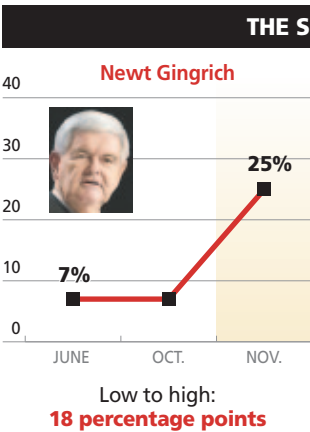
Former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani decided to campaign lightly in Iowa in favor of focusing on Florida and other delegate-rich states later in the nominating calendar. His moderate views on social issues also caused concern for many Iowa caucusgoers.



High to low:
11 percentage points

A two-term vice president, Bush began the race as the front-runner. But he was tripped up by a combination of Christian broadcaster Pat Robertson's surge, the poor farm economy and a perceived aloofness that didn't connect with Iowans.

2012, THE VOLATILE SAGA THUS FAR



*Now out of race
Source: Iowa Poll